

JACKPILE-PAGUATE URANIUM MINE – PUEBLO OF LAGUNA

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Jackpile Uranium Mining and Reclamation 1953-2015

BACKGROUND:

The Jackpile-Paguate Uranium Mine site is located near the town of Paguate in the Pueblo of Laguna reservation approximately 40 miles west of Albuquerque. Jackpile was once the world's largest open pit uranium mine, owned by the Anaconda Minerals Company. Operating from 1953-1982, it was closed because of depressed uranium prices. During the 29 years of mining, approximately 400 million tons of rocks were moved within the mine area and approximately 25 million tons of uranium ore were transported via the Santa Fe Railroad from the mine to Anaconda's Bluewater Mill.

TIMELINE OF PAST EVENTS:

The Jackpile uranium mine was closed in 1982. Lack of specific regulations pertaining to reclamation of uranium mines lead to the creation of Laguna setting its own regulations and requirements. These regulations and requirements are spelled out in the Record of Decision (ROD) issued by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in 1986. The decision factors identified in the ROD were, to ensure human health and safety, reduce the release of radioactive elements, and ensure integrity of all existing cultural, religious and archaeological sites.

Reclamation work by the Laguna Construction Co. Inc. was completed December 1996 after 6 years of reclamation work at a cost of 43 million dollars, paid by ARCO. The volume of material moved during reclamation was 33,000,000 cubic yards of earth. Regulatory oversight was done by the Department of the Interior. (BIA and BLM)



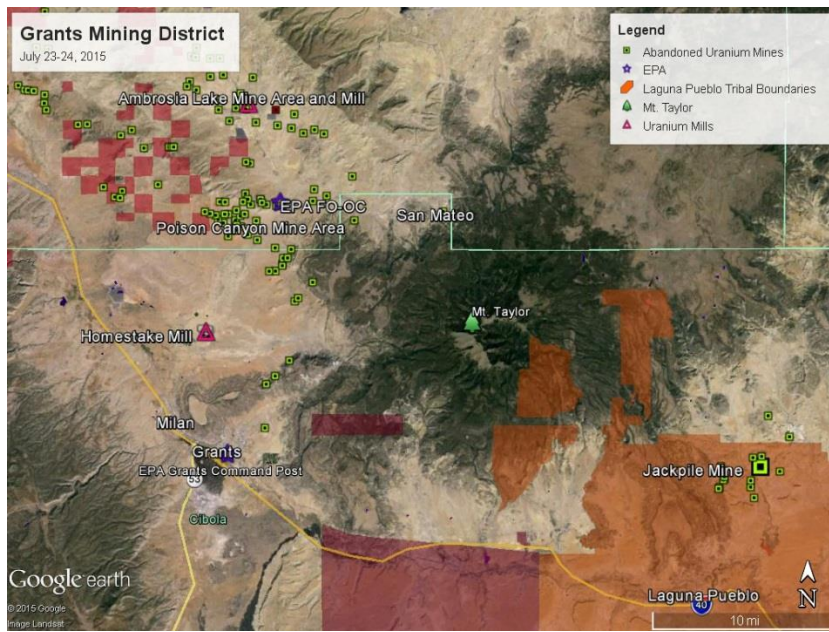
Jackpile Mine Pit Demolition, 1956



Jackpile, 2015

CURRENT CONDITION AND CONTAMINANTS:

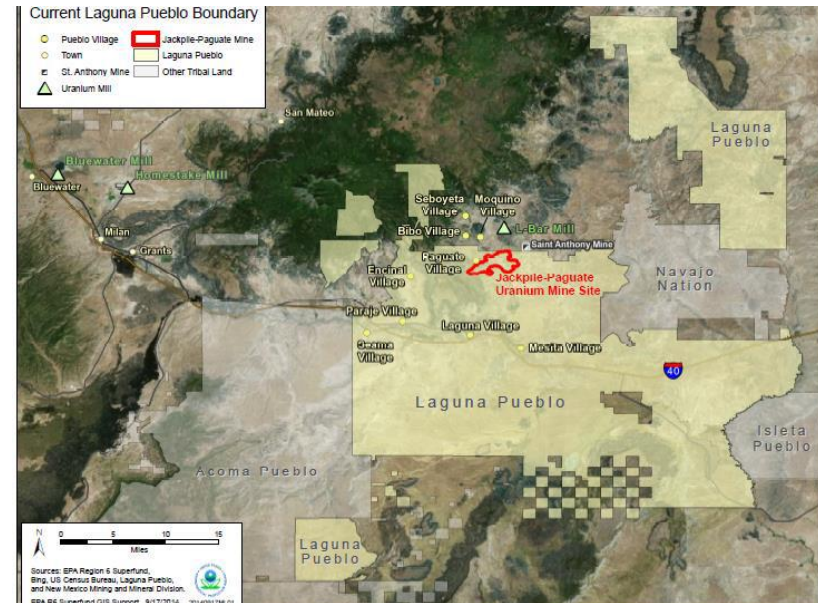
The primary site contaminants include uranium (U-234, U-235 and U-238), arsenic, barium, chromium, cobalt, copper, lead, manganese, vanadium, selenium and zinc. There are high concentrations of U-238 in surface water immediately downstream of the former mine facility. Surface waters of the Rio Paguete and in the Paguete reservoir contain elevated levels of isotopic uranium. Mt Taylor is the headwater source for all rivers affecting tribal lands surrounding the mountain, including the Jackpile-Paguete mine site. Mining, milling and other large scale operations have the potential for disrupting the main water resources in the area. As Mt. Taylor and its surroundings are designated Traditional Cultural Property by the state of NM, the Laguna and Navajo tribes require Public Notice and Public Comment with issues regarding Mt Taylor and surrounding water resources.



Jackpile Mine Site and Grants Mining District

URANIUM MINES & MILLS IN THE AREA

- Jackpile Mine – Reclaimed
- St Anthony Mine – Unreclaimed
- SOHIO Mill – Reclaimed
- Haystack Mine – Reclaimed
- Ambrosia Lake Mines and Mill – Reclaimed/Point Source/Superfund
- Rio Algom Mill – Reclaimed
- Homestake Mines and Mill – Reclaimed/New lease/Superfund
- Bluewater Mill – Reclaimed
- Churchrock/Crownpoint Mill – Reclaimed



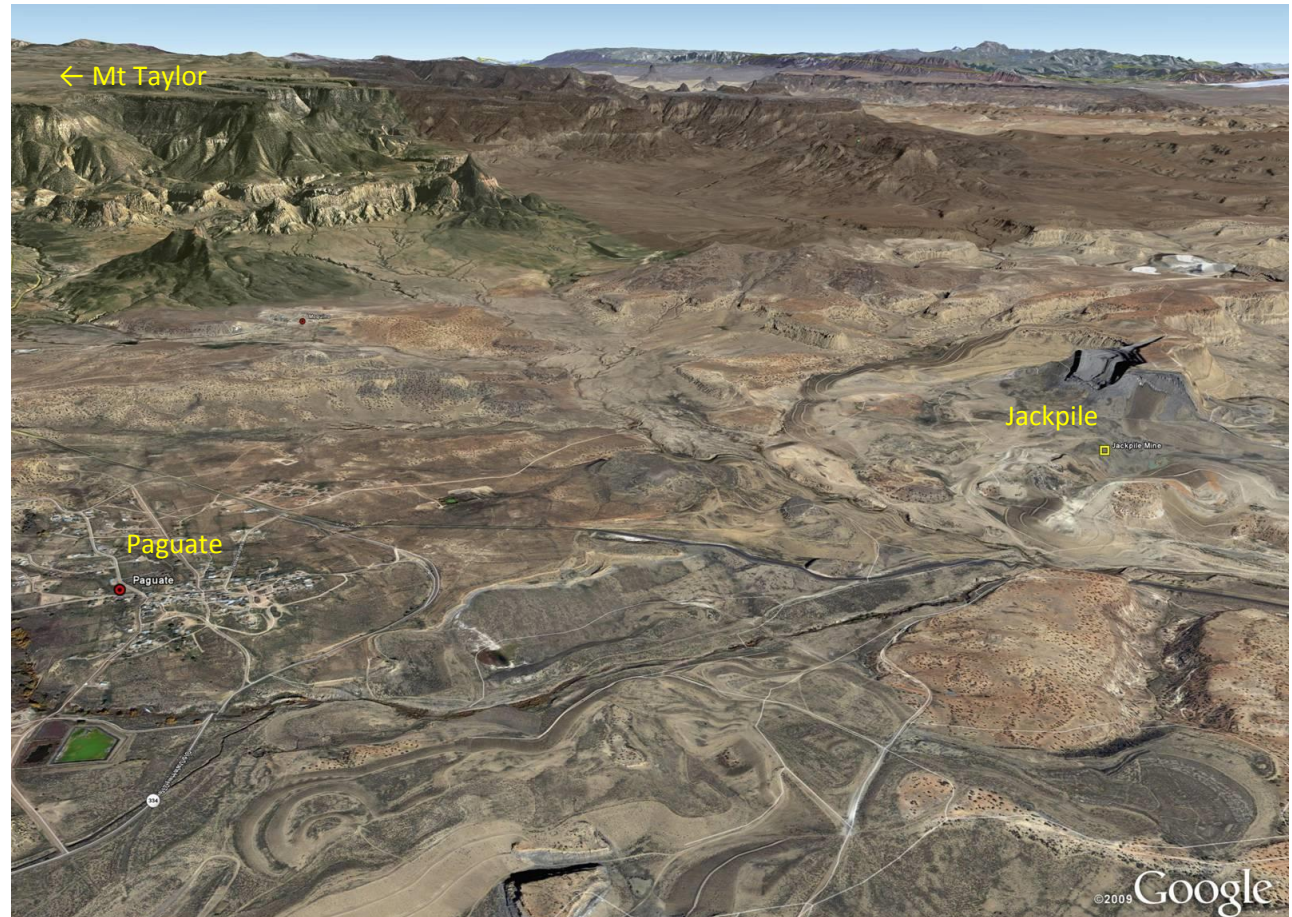
Map of Laguna Pueblo Boundaries and Jackpile Mine Site

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST AND FUTURE:

In September 2007, a Record of Decision (ROD) Compliance Assessment for Jackpile-Paguate Uranium Mine was performed, along with an Addendum to the Report in November, 2011, to determine if the reclamation work had met the requirements of the Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision. The reports concluded that the reclamation of the mine was incomplete. The mine site was listed on the National Priorities List in December 2013. The Site hazard Ranking System Score is 50.00. Although some reclamation work has been conducted in the past, the site can now undergo remediation through the CERCLA process using risk-based analysis of the site conditions. The Laguna Construction Company has begun Superfund 101, uranium safety, and RI/FS training in order to begin remediation work.

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Ariel Overview of North and South Pits and the town of Paguete